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ABSTRACT

In response to the escalation of violent crime among youth in Knoxville, Tennessee, two partnerships have been developed by Pellissippi State Technical Community College (PSTCC), a university and the K-12 system in the Greater Knoxville area, and community leaders to provide non-violent alternatives for youth. The first effort, the annual Greater Knoxville Martin Luther King, Jr., Youth Symposium is designed to introduce non-violent alternatives to participants through the use of small group dialogue, collaboration, interactive role play, skits, and video case studies. Held since 1989, symposium staff include volunteers from PSTCC and community organizations. The second effort, the Leadership 8 partnership between a local anti-violence coalition and Vine Middle School, is designed to provide time and resources to the school's 8th grade class to help them make the transition to high school. In designing collaborative programs for inner city youth, organizers should make an honest self-assessment, examining the reasons for developing the program and personal attitudes about youth and the inner city; collaborate with others for a sustained effort; use targeted brainstorming to plan activities, and programs; focus efforts on specific goals; and contact corporate sponsors and interested participants in a timely manner. A list of 19 related groups providing shared resources and 3 educational programs and videos is appended. (TGI)

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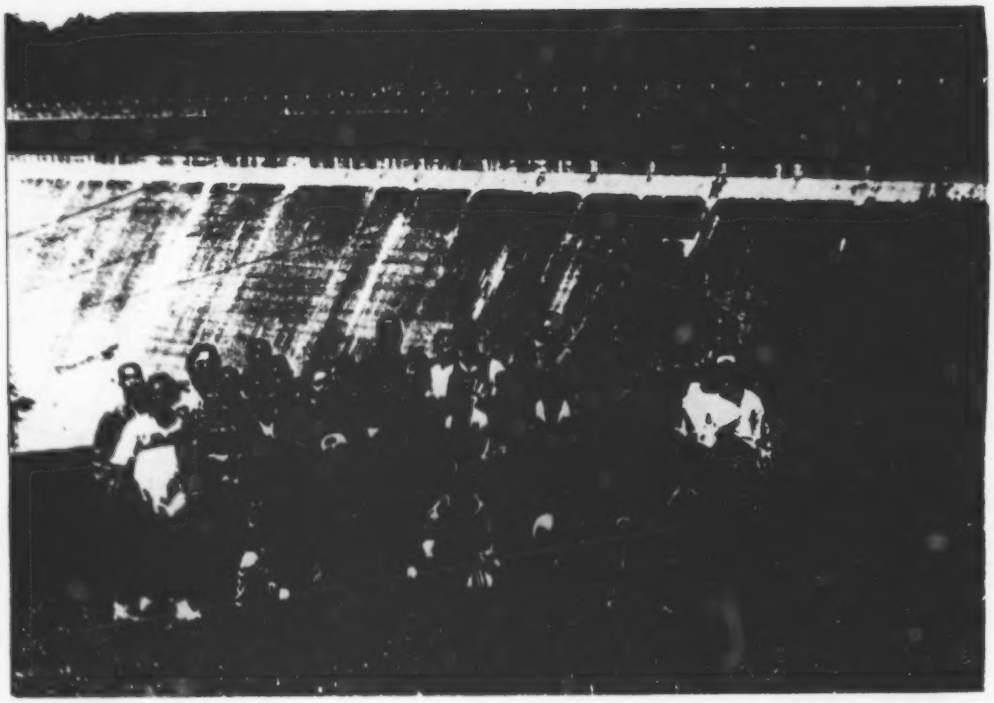
PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE:
A Community Collaborates for Inner City Youth

Vrondelia Chandler



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PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE: A COMMUNITY COLLABORATES FOR INNERCITY YOUTH

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There are many bright and capable young people who will not live to walk our campuses if we do not concern ourselves with the violence they must face daily. This presentation will profile two successful efforts involving a community college, university, K-12 system, local community leaders, churches, and area businesses.

Abstract

In response to the escalation of violent crime among youth, the legal system and the juvenile justice system have advocated stronger penalties that transfer juvenile offenders to adult prisons. Our approach differs in that the program emphasis is on violence prevention and is targeted toward changing individual behavior rather than changing the systems and settings that influence violent behavior.

There are resources available on the college campus that can help young people make better choices for healthier lifestyles. By introducing innercity youth to alternative ways of resolving conflict and dealing with anger, incidences of violence may be reduced and the possibility of youth surviving to college age increased. This presentation will profile two initiatives in which higher education took a leadership role to meet a community need.

1. The Greater Knoxville MLK Youth Symposium, now in its forth year, is designed to address critical issues which disturb/destroy youth and offers young people positive, non-violent alternatives. The symposium is staffed by two co-chairs and a team of approximately 75 volunteers.

2. The "Leadership 8" partnership between the Ujima Coalition and Vine Middle School (established 1993) is designed to provide time and resources for the 8th grade class during the second half of the school year (spring). Individuals from Pellissippi State, University of Tennessee Knoxville, Tennessee Valley Authority, Knoxville Police Department/Crime Prevention Unit, and the Mt. Olive Church Brotherhood comprise Ujima's nucleus team. [Ujima is a Kiswhahili term which means "collective work and responsibility--to build and maintain our community together; to make our brothers and sisters' problems our problems and solve them together"]

Peace and Non-Violence:
A Community Collaborates for Inner City Youth

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Session Objectives:

1. Share overview of two collaborative initiatives designed to provide non-violent alternatives to youth (MLK Youth Symposium and Vine Middle School/Ujima Coalition Partnership)

2. Offer participants an opportunity to exchange contacts and resources on local youth issues/concerns

MLK Youth Symposium Overview ..... pp. 2-3

Vine Middle School Partnership Overview ..... pp. 4-5

Suggestions for Getting Started ..... p. 6

Shared Resources ..... pp. 7-10

PERSONAL ACTION/IDEA SHEET ..... .(inside back cover)

M.L.K. YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

Since 1989, the Greater Knoxville metro area has observed the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday with a number of commemorative events. The city-wide celebration is now one of the largest in the southeast. In the fall of 1992, a "Youth Involvement" committee was established and Ronni Chandler was appointed co-chair.

Our strategy is proactive and preventive. Many times young people cannot change the systems and settings that influence violent behavior, but they CAN change their individual behavior and response to conflict. The Youth Symposium addresses youth violence by introducing non-violent alternatives through small group dialogue, collaboration, interactive role play, skits, and video case study. Our concentration is on skill-building for grades 4-12. We encourage young people to choose peace as a lifestyle.

In 1993, the first MLK Youth Symposium was successfully presented with 175 youth in attendance. The second annual symposium in 1994 drew 250 youth. Attendance for the 1995 symposium topped 350. The Symposium is always held on the Saturday of the King Holiday weekend. There is no fee but registration is required through schools and churches.

A unique feature of the Youth Symposium is the concurrent session for adults in attendance. Parents, school officials, youth workers, church leaders, etc. gain first-hand knowledge of the problems confronting youth while, simultaneously, giving youth a platform to explore and express their issues. An established network of youth facilitators come together for the Symposium. The facilitators/recorders are persons who work with youth on a year-round basis, are sensitive to their issues, and have an easy rapport that helps guide youth discussion. College student volunteers from Pellissippi State, UT Knoxville, Knoxville College, and Maryville College also serve as Symposium staff. A healthy lunch is provided free to participating youth through established partnerships with area businesses. Community volunteers serve the lunch and clean up after. Administration, faculty, and staff of Austin-East High School (innercity Knoxville) have provided space for the symposium since 1993. This location is easily accessible to at-risk youth in the innercity metro area who many times are disproportionally affected by violence.

Creative group reports presented by the youth at the conclusion of the day and evaluation forms indicate that new information has been imparted and an attitude shift may be beginning. Participants are able to elucidate one strategy learned during the day. We know we can't change the world in a day, or even alleviate the pain in so many of these young lives, but what we strive to do in this one day is plant seeds for peace.

Greater Knoxville's Annual King Week Youth Symposium

PURPOSE

In an effort to confront the critical issues that disturb and destroy our youth, the M.L.K. Commission's Youth Involvement Committee leads a team of talented and committed volunteers in designing and presenting an annual Saturday Youth Symposium each January. The objectives are:

1. To provide a deeper understanding that there are consequences to the choices we make

2. To offer an introduction to non-violent, alternative ways of dealing with anger to resolve conflict peacefully

3. To give youth a platform to tell program planners what youth issues are, from their own perspective

4. To provide a concurrent parent/community concerns session for adult dialogue

"LEADERSHIP 8"

In December 1993, a "Stop the Violence" grassroots, community movement took shape following a rash of violent deaths of innercity youth--including three consecutive weekends of drive-by shootings. Community forums were held at six strategic locations in the city. Ronni Chandler served as chair of the Youth Committee. Feedback from the Community Forums was summarized and shared with agencies, organizations, and churches for follow-up programming.

Among many concerns shared with the Youth Committee was the fact that 12 current or former Vine Middle School students had been killed or seriously wounded as a result of violent incidents within the previous year. A coalition of concerned individuals (The Ujima Coalition) joined together to provide resources and support for Vine Middle, particularly for the 8th grade class about to make the transition to high school.

[Due to copyright restrictions, this section has been removed. It contained *Violence workshops To Be Held in Inner City*, by Jacquelyn B. Dean from the 12/11/93 edition of the Knoxville News Sentinel.]

"LEADERSHIP 8"

(preparation, communication, respect)

The Ujima Coalition/Vine Middle 8th Grade Partnership

"Ujima" Defined

In the Kiswhahili East African language, ujima (oo-GEE-mah) means "collective work and responsibility--to build and maintain our community together; to make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and solve them together."

Purpose

The Ujima Coalition was created in December 1993 following the "Stop the Violence" grassroot, community initiative in Knoxville. The sole purpose of the Coalition is to work with Vine Middle School to provide time and resources for the 8th Grade Class. "Leadership 8" is a five month commitment (January - May).

Who is "Ujima?"

Ujima Coalition volunteers are concerned individuals, groups, organizations, and agencies who share a common interest in improving the lives of young people. Most are African American. In the fall of 1994, the Ujima Coalition became an official 'adopter' through the Knox County Schools Adopt-A-School Program. School contact person: Sherone Shavers, Guidance Counselor for Vine Middle School (594-4466).

The Leadership 8 Partnership Timeline

by December	Meet Principal/Guidance Counselor
January	Meet with 8th Grade Faculty
January	8th Graders Planning Session
February	Signing Ceremony/pizza reception for the Class and their family (advance timely notice to be sent home)
February - May	Super Tuesdays, field trips, programs, motivational speakers, projects, year-end celebration

Program Components

Planning Session with Students
Student Representatives Elected/Involved in Planning
Signing Ceremony/Pizza Reception
Super Tuesdays (Lunch with 8th Graders)
Motivational Assemblies & Programs Planned from 8th Grade Ideas
Field Trips
Gallery/Positive Images Posters
Parent/Family Support
Year End Celebration

[.vine]leadership8_flyer

Rev. Spring 1995/rc

Getting Started: Designing Collaborative Programs for Inner City Youth

Honest Self-Assessment

- why do I want to do this?
- what are my own attitudes and beliefs about young people?
- what are my own attitudes and beliefs about the inner city?
- what is my level of comfort on youth issues?
  - (would I be more effective providing resources? time?money? programs in the neighborhood? programs to expose youth to experiences outside the neighborhood?)
- do I believe I can make a difference?

Network

- who else cares about this and how do we connect for a SUSTAINED effort?

Targeted brainstorming

- what might we do? (activities, programs, events, resources, etc.)

Focused effort

- *Realize you can't save the world--there will be young people you loose despite your best effort. You will be successful if you can reach ONE.*
- what is the goal? (why are we doing this?)
- what resources will this require?
  - (people, place, time, food, transportation, printing, etc)

Consider timing

- (when is a good time for those you're trying to reach? for you? corporate sponsors need early notice, in writing)

DO it!

Shared Resources
(a sampling from Knoxville, Tennessee)

3D - Dialogue, Dissemination of information, Demonstration of unity
(African American men in support of community, grassroots)
CONTACT: (Ms.) Pat Crippins, CAC East Neighborhood Center,
2661 Magnolia Ave., Knoxville Tn (423/546-5125)

100 Black Men of Knoxville, Inc.
(professional men, mentoring youth)
CONTACT: Willie Gee, P.O. Box 14547, Knoxville TN 37914-1457 (423/985-3257)

African American Appalachian Arts, Inc./Watato Drummers & Dancers
(festival, culture, youth theater, Alex Haley Memorial Square)
CONTACT: Evon Easley, 1600 Rosedale Ave., Knoxville TN 37915 (423/525-0961)

Black Achievers Program/Eastside YMCA
(mentoring)
CONTACT: Kamau Kenyatta, 3124 Wilson Ave., Knoxville TN 37914 (423/637-9622)

Black Student Leadership Network
(Childrens Defense Fund @Haley Farm, for college students)
CONTACT: Rollie Williams, P.O. Box 187, Clinton TN 37717-0187 (423/457-6466)

Carpetbag Theater
(summer youth institute on writing, directing, performing)
CONTACT: Linda U. Hill, 1928 Prospect Place, Knoxville TN 37914 (423/673-8088)

Boys & Girls Club Teen Center at Moses School
(activities, mentoring)
CONTACT: Jackie Moore, 220 Carrick Street, Suite 301 Knoxville TN 37921 (423/637-5523)

Drug Free Tennessee - Adolescent Unit
(youth drug abuse prevention)
CONTACT: Joyce Felder, 412 Citico Street, Knoxville TN 37921 (423/524-5757)

G.O.C.A.P. - Gang Offenders Comprehensive Action Program
(Knoxville Police Dept. Crime Prevention Taskforce)
CONTACT: Kelly Drummond, KPD Crime Prevention, P.O. Box 3610,
Knoxville, TN 37927 (423/521-1299)

Grapevine
(African American women, grassroots & professional)
CONTACT: Pat Crippins, CAC East Neighborhood Center,
2661 Magnolia Avenue, Knoxville Tn (423/546-5125)

MLK Youth Symposium on Non-Violence
(annual symposium for middle/high school ages)
CONTACT EITHER: Jane Redmond, UTK, 812 Volunteer Boulevard, Knoxville, TN 37996 (423/974-6861) or Vrondelia Chandler, PSTCC, P.O.Box 22990, Knoxville TN 37933-0990 (423/694-6553)

Project 2001
(Recycling in public housing developments, "Recycle Rappers")
CONTACT: Umoja Abdul'Ahad, 2725 Wimpole Ave., Knoxville TN 37914 (423/637-5049)

Summer Citizen Project
(youth citizenship/leadership development)
CONTACT EITHER: Pat Crippins, CAC East Neighborhood Center, 2661 Magnolia Avenue, Knoxville TN (423/546-5125) or Laura Nichols, Kids Voting TN, 602 S. Gay Street, Knoxville, TN 37902 (423/637-7422)

S.W.A.D.A. - Sisters with A Different Agenda
(young African Am. women, teen pregnancy/violence/self esteem)
CONTACT: Janie Ortiz, P.O. Box 4202, Knoxville TN 37921 (423/576-3614)

Tribe One Empowerment and Publishing
(rites of passage)
CONTACT EITHER: Danny Mayfield or Christopher Woodhull P.O. Box 1901, Knoxville TN 37901 (423/546-4131)

Ujima Coalition/Vine Middle School partnership
(community support of a community school)
CONTACT: Vrondelia Chandler, PSTCC, P.O.Box 22990, Knoxville TN 37933-0990 (423/694-6553)

W.A.V.E. - We Are Victims Everyday
(support for families of victims and perpetrators)
CONTACT: Mildred Westfield, 1628 Dunbar Street, Knoxville TN 36721

Youth In-School Grief Support
(helping grieving friends)
CONTACT: Natalia Underwood, 6015 Waterbury Lane, Knoxville Tn 37912

Youth on the Move for Christ
(youth-led interdenominational group, several churches)
CONTACT: Shirley Kincaid/group advisor, 1519 Folsom Street, Knoxville, TN 37917 (423/637-2602)

Shared Resources
(other excellent resources)

"Resolving Conflict Through Mediation"
Educational Program for Middle School Students

Aetna Life & Casualty Co.
Contact: Barbara Sarkis
Law and Regulatory Affairs, RE4C
151 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06156-3124
(203/273-2341)

Crisis Intervention/Violence Prevention/Gang Redirection/
Peace Programs

SOSAD (Save Our Sons and Daughters)
Contact: Clementine Barfield
2441 West Boulevard
Detroit, Michigan 48208
(313/361-5200)

"Dealing with Anger" videos (see full description)
Violence Prevention for African American Youth

Research Press
Dept. 96
P.O. Box 9177
Champaign IL 61826
(217/352-3273)